DANGERS in the HOME

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*Bismi Allahi a**l**rrahmani a**l**rraheem**i***

In the name of Allah, the most Beneficent, the most Merciful

Dangers in the Home

Book by Sheikh Muhammed Salih Al-Munajjid

In the Name of Allaah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Praise be to Allaah. We praise Him and seek His help and forgiveness. We seek refuge with Allaah from the evil of our own selves and from our evil deeds. Whomsoever Allaah guides cannot be led astray, and whomsoever Allaah leaves astray cannot be guided. I bear witness that there is no god but Allaah Alone, with no partner or associate, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger.

Putting things right in the home is a great trust and huge responsibility which every Muslim man and woman should undertake as Allaah commands; they should run the affairs of their homes in accordance with the rules set out by Allaah. One of the ways of achieving this is by ridding the home of evil things. The following aims to highlight some evil things that actually happen in some homes and that have become tools of destruction for the nests in which the future generations of the Muslim ummah are being raised.

This brief paper highlights some of these evil things, explaining about some haraam things in order to warn about them. It is a gift to every seeker of truth who is looking for methods of change, so that he or she can implement the command of the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him): "Whoever of you sees an evil action, let him change it with his hand [by taking action], and if he cannot, then with his tongue [by speaking out], and if he cannot, then with his heart [by feeling that it is wrong] – and that is the weakest of faith." (Reported by Muslim in his *Saheeh*, 1/69).

This discussion expands upon some forbidden or evil matters that have already been mentioned in brief in my book *The Muslim Home – 40 Recommendations*.

I ask Allaah, the Most Generous, Lord of the Mighty Throne, to benefit my Muslim brothers through this book and the previous book. Allaah is the Guide to the Straight Path.

Evil things in the Home

Advice:

Beware of allowing non-mahram relatives to enter upon the wife in the home when the husband is absent. Some homes are not free of the presence of relatives of the husband who are not mahram for the wife, who may be living in his home with him because of some social circumstances, such as his brothers who may be students or single. These

relatives enter the home without anyone raising an eyebrow, because they are known in the neighbourhood as being relatives of the head of the household, his brothers or nephews or uncles. This relaxed attitude could generate a lot of evil which will earn the wrath of Allaah if it is not controlled and brought within the limits set by Allaah. The basic principle in this matter is the hadeeth of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), "Beware of entering upon women." A man from among the Ansaar said, "O Messenger of Allaah, what do you think about the brother-in-law?" He said, "The brother-in-law is death!" (Reported by al-Bukhaari, *Fath al-Baari*, 9/330).

Al-Nawawi (may Allaah have mercy on him) said: "What is referred to in this hadeeth is the husband's relatives apart from his father and his sons, because those are mahrams for his wife and can be alone with her, so they are not described as death. What is referred to here is his brother, nephew, uncle and cousin, and others who she would be permitted to marry if she were not already married. Usually people take the matter lightly with regard to these relatives, so a brother may be alone with his brother's wife. Thus he is likened to death, when he should be prevented from being alone with her more than a stranger should." (*Fath al-Baari*, 9/331).

The phrase "the brother-in-law is death" has a number of meanings, such as:

That being alone with the brother-in-law may lead to spiritual destruction if she commits sin;

Or it may lead to death if she commits the immoral act (zina or adultery) and the punishment of stoning is carried out on her;

Or it may lead to the woman being destroyed if her husband leaves her because his jealousy leads him to divorce her;

Or it may mean, beware of being alone with a non-mahram woman just as you would beware of death;

Or it may mean that being alone with a non-mahram woman is as bad as death.

It was said that it means, let the brother-in-law die rather than be alone with a non-mahram woman,

All of this stems from the concern of Islam to preserve families and households, and to prevent the tools of destruction reaching them in the first place. Having learned what the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said, what do you think now of those husbands who tell their wives, "If my brother comes and I am not here, let him into the sitting room", or a wife who tells a guest, "Go into the sitting room" when there is no one else present in the house?

To those who raise the issue of trust as an excuse, saying "I trust my wife, and I trust my brother, or my cousin", we say: your trust is all well and good, and you should not be suspicious when you have no cause to do so, but you should know that the hadeeth of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), "No man is alone with a non-mahram woman, but the Shaytaan is the third one present with them" (reported by al-Tirmidhi, 1171) includes the most pious of people as well as the most corrupt. Islam does not exempt anyone from such rulings.

Addition:

Whilst writing these few lines, we heard about a problematic situation in which, to cut a long story short, a man married a woman and brought her to live in his family home, where she lived happily with him. Then his younger brother began to enter upon her when her husband was absent, and talk to her in a romantic manner, which resulted in two things: firstly, she began to dislike her husband intensely, and secondly, she fell in love with his brother. But she was not able to divorce her husband, nor was she able to do what she wanted with the other man. This is the grievous penalty. This story illustrates one level of corruption, beyond which there are many more which culminate in the immoral action (zinaa/adultery) and the birth of illegitimate children.

Advice:

Segregating men and women in family visits.

Man is naturally gregarious and sociable; he needs friends and friendships entail visiting one another.

When there are visits between families, we should block the path of evil by not mixing. One of the indications that mixing is haraam is the aayah (interpretation of the meaning):

"… And when you ask his wives) for anything you want, ask them from behind a screen, that is purer for your hearts and for their hearts…" [al-Ahzaab 33:53]

If we were to look for the evil results of mixing during family visits, we would find many objectionable things, such as:

1. In most cases the hijab of women in these mixed gatherings is non-existent or is not proper, so a woman may display her beauty before someone in front of whom it is not permissible for her to uncover herself. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning): *"And tell the believing women… not to reveal their adornment…" [al-Noor 24:31]*. It may happen that a woman adorns herself for strangers in a mixed gathering in a way that she never does for her husband.

2. When men see women in one gathering, this is a cause of corruption in the religion

and morals, and provokes desires in a forbidden manner.

3. The spouses may argue and ignore one another in an alarming fashion, when one looks at or winks at another man's wife, or laughs and jokes with her, and she with him. After a couple returns home, the settling of scores begins:

   Man: Why did you laugh at what so and so said, when he did not say anything funny?

   Woman: And why did you wink at so and so?

   Man: When he spoke, you understood him quickly, but you do not understand what I say at all!

   Thus they trade accusations and the matter ends in enmity and even divorce.

4. Some men and woman may regret their luck in marriage, when a man compares his wife to his friend's wife, or a woman compares her husband to her friend's husband. A man may say to himself: "So and so talks and answers questions… she is well-educated and my wife is ignorant, she has no education…" and a woman may say to herself, "So and so is so lucky! Her husband is smart and eloquent, and my husband is so boring and speaks without thinking." This spoils the marital relationship or leads to bad treatment.

5. Some people may show off to one another by pretending to have things that they don't really have. So a man may issue instructions to his wife in front of other men and pretend that he has a strong personality, but when he is alone with her at home he is like a tame pussycat. A woman may borrow gold and wear it so that the other people may see that she has such and such. But the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "The one who shows off with something that does not belong to him is like one who wears a garment of falsehood." (Reported by al-Bukhaari, *al-Fath*, 9/317)

6. These late-night mixed gatherings result in wasted time, sins of the tongue, and leaving small children home alone (so that they do not disturb the evening with their cries!)

7. These late-night mixed gatherings may even develop to the extent of involving many kinds of major sins, such as drinking wine and gambling, especially among the so-called "upper classes". One of the major sins that occur during these gatherings is following the kuffaar and imitating them in fashions and various customs. The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said, "Whoever imitates a people is one of them." (Reported by Imaam Ahmad in *al-Musnad*, 2/50; *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 2828, 6025).

Advice:

Beware of the dangers of having (male) drivers and (female) servants in the home.

Striving to ward off evil is a religious duty, and closing the doors of evil and fitnah (temptation) is one of the priorities of sharee'ah. A lot of fitnah and sin has come to us through servants and drivers, but many people do not pay attention to this, and if they do notice it, they do not take it seriously. A person may be stung repeatedly from the same place, but he does not feel the pain, or he may hear of a disaster that happened near his own home, but he does not learn from it. This stems from weak faith and the failure to feel that Allaah is near, failings that affect the hearts of many people in the modern age. We will briefly explain the bad effects of having servants and drivers in the home, so that it will be a reminder to the one who has the eyes to see or who wants to follow the right path in his own home.

Having female servants in the home presents men, especially young ones, with fitnah and temptation, through their adornment and being alone with them. We hear so many stories, one after another, of some youth being led astray, and the reason for this is that the servant entered upon a young man, or a young man took advantage of the fact that no one else was home and entered upon the servant. Some young men have told their families frankly about what happened, and the families did not respond; in other cases the family may have discovered something, but their response was bereft of any sense of honour or jealousy. *"O Yoosuf! Turn away from this! (O woman!) Ask forgiveness for your sin. Verily, you were of the sinful." [Yoosuf 12:29 – interpretation of the meaning]*. So the fire remains close to the fuel, and the situation is left as it is, with no changes being made. It has also happened that servants have taught misbehaviour to the daughters of the household.

- The lady of the house neglects her duties and forgets her responsibilities, and becomes accustomed to being lazy, then when the servants travels things are very hard indeed for her.

- The children receive a bad upbringing, represented by the following examples:

The children learn the beliefs of kufr from kaafir servants, Christians and Buddhists. There have been children who make the sign of the cross on their heads and two sides of their chests, as they have seen a Christian woman doing when she prays, and she tells them, "This is something sweet from Christ." Or a child may see a servant praying to a statue of Buddha, or another celebrating her people's festivals and conveying to our children her feelings of joy, so they get used to taking part in festivals of kufr.

The children are deprived of their mother's love and care, which is an essential part of their upbringing and psychological stability. A servant cannot make up this lack for a child who is not hers.

The child's Arabic will be corrupted because it is mixed with foreign words, so he grows

up lacking something, which will have an adverse effect on his education in school.

Some heads of households feel the financial strain of paying salaries for drivers and servants. Then there are the family disputes that arise over who should pay these salaries, especially in cases where the wife is employed. If the wife would stay at home instead of working outside the home, she would spare herself a lot of trouble. The fact of the matter is that in many cases we create trouble for ourselves, then we demand a solution, and often the solution we come up with is far from decisive.

Getting used to having servants has created dependency and negative character traits.

Some women may include having a servant as a condition in their marriage contract; others may plan on bringing their family's servant with them when they get married. Thus our daughters have lost the ability to deal independently with anything in the home, no matter how small it is.

- When women brought servants into their homes, they started to have a lot of free time and did not know what to do with it. So some women began to sleep a lot, and some are never home because they are always going to gatherings where they gossip and backbite and waste their time. The result will be regret on the Day of Resurrection.

- Harm comes to the members of the family in different ways, for example:

1- Witchcraft and magic, which can cause the separation of husband and wife, or cause physical harm.

2- Harm to the possessions of family members because of theft.

3- Damage to the family's reputation. How many decent homes have been turned into dens of immorality and corruption in the absence of their owners. You must surely have heard of female servants who receive men when the homeowners are absent.

- The freedom of men (those who fear Allaah) within their own homes is restricted, as is also the case for those who try to call their families to put things in order.

- Women end up being alone with drivers who are strangers (non-mahrams) to them, in the house or car, and women do not refrain from going out wearing adornments and perfume in front of the drivers. They act as if he is one of their mahrams or even closer, and because they go out with them so often and talk to them so much, the psychological barrier is broken down and so forbidden things are done. The frequency of such incidents in our society demonstrates to those who have the eyes to see just how serious the matter is.

- Bringing servants and drivers from all sorts of kaafir nations clearly goes against the Prophet's specific orders that kaafirs should not be allowed into the Arabian

Peninsula. There is absolutely no need to do this, as it is possible to bring Muslims in if there is a need for workers. Added to this is the fact that employing kaafirs strengthens the economies of kaafir nations, as the employees transfer their salaries to their homelands, even though Muslims should have priority in this matter. By mixing so much with these kaafirs, Muslims can no longer see the difference, which gradually destroys the concept of al-walaa wa'l-baraa' (loyalty and allegiance vs. enmity and disavowal) in their minds. Added to this is the ugly role played by some agency owners who have no fear of Allaah, who will tell you that there are no Muslim employees. Or they may engage in deceit and trickery, so that after a driver or servant who is described as a Muslim in official papers has arrived, the head of the household discovers that this is a lie, or the new employee may be playing a role that started in his country of origin, where the agency taught him a few Islamic words so that he can pose as a Muslim in front of the family that employs him.

- Family breakup resulting from the householder's affair with a female servant. Look at what really happens and think how many divorces have happened because of servants, and how many servants have become pregnant with illegitimate children.

  Then ask the people working in hospital maternity departments, or find out about police reports detailing the problems caused by illegitimate children born as a result of the temptation posed by female servants. Then try to understand the extent of the spread of venereal diseases which have been brought into our society because of that. Now you will understand the vicious circle we are in because of bringing female servants into our homes.

  Think about the misconceptions that these servants and drivers have about the Islamic religion when they see the behaviour of those who claim to be Muslim. Ask yourself, what kind of obstacles are we placing in front of them? How are we preventing them from discovering the way of Allaah by what we do to them? How could they possibly enter a religion when this is the state of those who claim to belong to it?

Because of these matters and others, some scholars think that it is not permissible to bring female servants into the home in the manner in which this is done nowadays, and that it is obligatory to put a stop to fitnah and close the door to evil. (See the fatwa of Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-'Uthaymeen on this issue).

In order to comply with the command of Allaah (interpretation of the meaning), *"… and when you give your word, say the truth…" [al-An'aam 6:152]*, we should point out the following:

Firstly: we do not deny the fact that some servants and drivers are sincere Muslims, possibly more sincere than the members of the household. We have heard of a servant who keeps a Mus-haf (copy of the Qur'aan) on the shelf in the kitchen so that she can read it whenever she finishes her work, and a driver who prays Fajr in the mosque before

his employer does.

Secondly: we are not ignoring the real needs that people sometimes have for essential reasons, such as needing the help of servants in a large house, or when a family has a lot of children, or when someone is chronically ill or has disabilities, or when there is hard work that the wife cannot do on her own. But what we Muslims should ask is: who is applying Islamic conditions and taking care of religious precautions when bringing servants and drivers into the home? How many of those who bring drivers into the home (let's get real!) can guarantee that the driver will not be alone with one of his womenfolk, or that the man will not be alone with a female servant? He should also tell the female servant to observe hijaab, and he should not deliberately look at her adornment. If he comes home and no one is there but the servant, he should not enter. He should not accept any servants except those who are sincerely Muslim… and so on.

For this reason, everyone who has one of these servants or drivers in his home should make sure that this person is there for a legitimate need and that the Islamic conditions are being properly fulfilled. The story of Yoosuf (upon whom be peace) contains a lesson for us with regard to this matter. It clearly indicates the fitnah that exists when there are servants and drivers in the house, and that evil may be initiated by members of the household even though the servants are people who fear Allaah. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"And she, in whose house he was, sought to seduce him (to do an evil act), she closed the doors and said: 'Come on, O you.' He said, 'I seek refue in Allaah (or Allaah forbid)!'…" [Yoosuf 12:23]

We suggest to those who complain that things are too difficult in their homes without servants that they could do the following:

- Buy ready-made food from the market; use paper plates; use laundry services; have the house cleaned by workers who are supervised by the man; ask relatives to help care for the children when necessary, such as when the wife is recovering from childbirth.

- If that is not enough, they could seek the help of a temporary servant, under proper Islamic conditions, and when there is no longer any need she may be dismissed. There are, however, risks attached to this solution.

- It is better if the servant is paid hourly, so that she can do her job then leave the house. Whatever the case, things should be done only as they are needed.

- We have discussed this matter at length because the problem is so widespread in our society. It may be different in other countries. Before closing this discussion we should mention some matters that have to do with taqwa or fear of Allaah:

1- Everyone who has sources of fitnah in his home, whether from servants or from anything else, should fear Allaah and remove them from his home.

2- Everyone who thinks that he is going to impose Islamic conditions when bringing a servant to his home should fear Allaah and realize that many of these conditions will become less stringent as time goes by.

3- Everyone who has a kaafir servant in the Arabian Peninsula should present Islam to him or her in the best possible way. If he or she becomes Muslim, all well and good, otherwise the servant should be sent back to wherever he or she came from.

Finally, we will end this discussion on servants and drivers with a story that contains an important lesson about the dangers of having servants in the home, and about referring to the Qur'aan and Sunnah, and rejecting every ruling that contradicts the sharee'ah, and consulting people of knowledge, and purifying the Islamic society through application of the punishments prescribed by Allaah.

Abu Hurayrah and Zayd ibn Khaalid (may Allaah be pleased with them) said: "We were with the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) when a man stood up and said, 'I urge you by Allaah to judge between us according to the Book of Allaah.' His opposite number, who was more knowledgeable, stood up and said, 'Judge between us according to the Book of Allaah and give me permission to speak.' The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said, 'Speak.' He said, 'This son of mine was employed as a servant by this man, and committed zina (adultery) with his wife. I gave him one hundred sheep and a servant in compensation [for the damage to his honour], then I consulted some of those who have knowledge, and they told me that my son should be flogged one hundred times and exiled for a year [because he was unmarried], and that the woman should be stoned [because she was married and she consented to the act].' The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: 'By the One in Whose hand is my soul, I will judge between you according to the Book of Allaah. Take back the hundred sheep and the servant. Your son is to be flogged one hundred times and exiled for one year. O Unays, go to this man's wife tomorrow and if she confesses, then stone her.' [Unays] went to her the next day and she confessed, so he stoned her." (Reported by al-Bukhaari, *al-Fath*, 12/136).

Note: one of the things that upsets every Muslim who cares about the rulings of Islam is what happens in some homes, where cleaners and maintenance workers enter upon women when they are wearing nightdresses and house-dresses. Does these women think that these people are not men in front of whom Allaah has commanded them to observe hijaab?

Another evil thing that happens in some homes is where non-mahram men teach adolescent girls, or some women teach adolescent boys without wearing hijaab.

Advice:

Expelling effeminate men from our homes.

Al-Bukhaari (may Allaah have mercy on him) reported, in his chapter on expelling men who imitate women from our homes, the hadeeth of Ibn 'Abbaas, who said: "The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) cursed men who imitate women and women who imitate men, and said, 'Expel them from your homes.' The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) expelled so and so [a man]. And 'Umar expelled so and so [a woman]." (Reported by al-Bukhaari in *Kitaab al-Libaas*, chapter 62, *al-Fath*, 10/333).

Then al-Bukhaari quoted the hadeeth of Umm Salamah, which he reported under the title "What is forbidden of men who imitate women entering upon women":

"From Umm Salamah, who said that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) was in her house, where there was also an effeminate man who told her brother 'Abd-Allaah ibn Abi Umayyah: 'If Allaah wills that you conquer al-Taa'if tomorrow, I will show you the daughter of Ghaylaan; she has four folds of fat in front and eight behind.' The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said, 'This person should not enter upon you.'" (Reported by al-Bukhaari, chapter 113, *al-Fath*, 9/333).

The definition of "effeminate man" (mukhannath): this is a man who may resemble women physically, or by imitating their movements and speech, and so on. If it is physical, i.e., this is the way that he is made, then there is no blame on him, but he must try as much as he can to change this resemblance. If he is imitating women deliberately, then he is described as mukhannath (effeminate) whether he commits the evil deed (is a homosexual) or not.

The effeminate man referred to here – who was like a servant – used to enter the houses of the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) because he was considered to be "an old male servant who lacked vigour" [cf. al-Noor 24:31].

When the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) realized that this person could describe women very precisely and that he was describing a woman as having four folds of fat in front and eight behind (four on each side), he ordered that he should be thrown out and not allowed to enter his wives' apartments, because of the mischief that he could cause, such as possibly describing the women he saw to strangers, or having a bad influence on the members of the household, such as leading women to imitate men, or men to imitate women by walking in a coquettish manner or speaking softly, or worse mischief than that.

So how about the situation nowadays, when we see many of these servants imitating the opposite sex, especially the kaafirs who are living in Muslim homes and who we know for sure are having a bad influence on Muslim boys and girls. There is even a group

known as "the third sex", who wear make up and dress in women's clothes. What a disaster for the nation which is supposed to be the ummah of jihaad!

If you want to know more about how the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) opposed this "third sex" and how his Companions fought with their sense of honour against such things, think about this hadeeth:

Abu Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him) reported that an effeminate man who had dyed his hands with henna (as women do) was brought to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), and it was said, "O Messenger of Allaah! This man is imitating women." So he banished him to al-Baqee' (as a punishment, sending him to an isolated place, and to protect others). It was said, "Why do you not kill him?" He said, "I have been forbidden to kill those who pray." (Reported by Abu Dawood, 4928, and others. See *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 2502).

Advice: Beware of the dangers of the small screen.

Hardly any home nowadays is free of some device that includes a screen [TV and computers], and very few of these machines are used for wholesome or beneficial purposes. Mostly they are used for harmful and destructive things, especially VCRs used for watching movies. With the arrival of satellite dishes which bring shows directly into Muslim homes and the widespread sale and exchange of movies, the matter of controlling these devices has become nearly impossible.

There follows a list of some of the harmful and corrupting effects that result from watching TV etc. After thinking about them, let everyone who wants to earn the pleasure of Allaah and avoid His wrath do what he can to change the situation:

Impact on our faith ('aqeedah):

- Showing the symbols of the kuffaar and their false religious signs, such as the cross, Buddha, their temples, gods and goddesses of love, good, evil, light, distress and rain. There are also missionary movies that call on people to venerate the religion of Christianity and become Christians.

- Giving the impression that some created beings could compete with Allaah in creating and giving life and death, such as some scenes which show people bringing the dead back to life by using a cross or magic wand.

- Spreading lies, myths, legends, witchcraft, fortune-telling and soothsaying, all of which contradict Tawheed.

- Giving the impression that we should show respect to the representatives of false religions, such as the pope, bishops and nuns who treat the sick and do good!

- In many dramas, characters swear by things other than Allaah, or play with the names of Allaah, such as when one character called another 'Abd al-Qeesaah. [This implies disrespect towards Allaah by toying with names that mean "slave of [Allaah]" – which are among the best names that a person can have. For example, 'Abd al-Rahmaan means "slave of the Most Merciful", 'Abd al-Hakeem means "slave of the Most Wise" and so on, but 'Abd al-Qeesaah means nothing and makes a mockery of such names. – Translator]

- Causing doubts about Allaah's power, or His ability to create; or portraying life as a conflict between Allaah and man.

- Those who watch such things lose the concept of disavowing oneself and distancing oneself from the enemies of Allaah, because these shows and movies portray things that make them admire the characters of the kuffaar and their societies, and break down the psychological barriers between Muslims and kuffaar. Once the idea of hatred for the sake of Allaah is removed, they begin to imitate these kuffaar and take new ideas from them.

Social impact

- Admiration of kaafir characters when they are shown as heroes in these films.

- Propagation of crime, through showing scenes of violence, murders, kidnap and rape.

- Forming gangs as is shown in films, to commit acts of aggression and crimes. Youth detention centres and jails bear witness to the impact of the movies in this regard.

- Learning the arts of cheating, fraud and forgery, taking bribes, and other kinds of major sins.

- Calling for women to imitate men and vice versa, which clearly goes against the hadeeth of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) in which he cursed those who do such things. So we may see a man imitating the way a woman walks and talks, wearing a wig and jewellery, using dyes and make-up. Or we may see a woman wearing a false beard or moustache, and making her voice deep. This is one of the causes of promiscuity in society and the emergence of the "third sex".

- Instead of taking the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), Sahaabah, scholars and mujaahideen as examples, people follow actors, singers, dancers and sports players.

- Men no longer feel any sense of responsibility towards their families, so important needs are ignored and sick children are neglected, because the head of the family is glued to the TV and may even hit a child harshly if he dares to interrupt his viewing of a

movie.

- Rebellion of children against their parents, as is propagated on TV and in the movies. If a child insists on taking money from his father, and his father reminds him of the rights he has, the child in a TV drama may say, “Just because you are my father does it mean that you can rip me off?!” But the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said, “You and your wealth belong to your father.” (Reported by Abu Dawood, 3530).

- Breakdown of family ties, because people are too busy watching movies to visit one another. When they do visit, they do not have any kind of useful conversation or discuss solutions to family problems because they are gathered around the screen, silently watching.

- People are distracted from taking care of their guests properly.

- Spread of laziness and idleness and reduction in productivity, because the TV takes up the Muslim’s time.

- Marital discord and mutual hatred; outbreaks of reprehensible jealousy, as when a man praises the beauty of a woman on TV in front of his wife, and she responds by mentioning a handsome actor or newscaster.

- Absence of the proper kind of jealousy (gheerah), because people get used to watching scenes of mixing, wives being uncovered in front of non-mahram men and unveiling of daughters and sisters, and they are influenced by calls for women’s liberation.

Moral impact

- Provoking desires by showing pictures of women to men, and images of handsome men to women.

- Calling society to show that which should be hidden by promoting revealing clothes and getting people used to seeing them.

- Calling for relationships between the sexes and teaching people how to get to know the opposite sex, what sort of words should be exchanged in the beginning, means of developing the forbidden relationship, telling stories of love and passion and holding hands… etc.

- Falling into immorality and zinaa because of films which portray such things. Some people even reenact what they see in the movies with some of their mahram relatives, may Allaah protect us, or do bad things whilst watching these films.

- Teaching women different kinds of dances which reveal their ‘awraat and are tempting to men. This is a kind of promiscuity and deviation.

- Developing a joking personality and no longer taking anything seriously, in addition to the fact that too much laughter corrupts the heart, because of comedy films.

- Spread of foul language which is used in many movies and TV shows.

- Making people miss Fajr prayers because they stay up late at night to watch what is being shown on the screen.

- Causing people to pray late, not to mention causing men to miss the prayers in the mosque, because their hearts are too attached to some soap opera, movie or sports match.

- Causing people to hate some acts of worship, as sometimes happens when an exciting match is interrupted so that people can go and pray.

- Reducing the reward of some of those who fast, or causing their reward to be lost altogether, because of the sin of watching these haraam things.

- Criticism of some of the rulings brought by sharee’ah, such as hijaab and polygyny.

Historical impact

- Distorting Islamic history and covering up the facts; failing to mention the achievements of Muslims in movies that speak about human history.

- Distorting proven historical facts, by showing oppressors as if they are oppressed, such as claiming that the Jews have a just cause.

- Belittling the heroes of Islam in the eyes of viewers, as in some dramas or movies where actors play the roles of Sahaabah, leaders of Islamic conquests or scholars and portray these personalities in an improper manner, mixing the story with love scenes, where the actors are immoral and corrupt in the first place.

- Subjecting the Muslims to psychological defeat and spreading fear among them by showing different kinds of advanced weaponry in the hands of the kaafirs and making the Muslims feel that it is not possible to defeat them.

Psychological impact:

- Acquiring aggressive and violent attitudes from watching wrestling and violent action films with scenes of bloodshed, bullets and sharp weapons.

- Instilling fear in the hearts of those who watch horror movies, so that a person may wake up screaming because of the dreams he has seen as a result of some scene that has stuck in his memory.

- Distortion of children’s and adults’ sense of reality by watching unreal scenes, because Allaah has dictated that there should be cause and effect. An example of this is some of the unreal scenes shown in cartoons, which have an effect on children’s behaviour in real life.

Impact on health

- Harm caused to eyesight, which is a blessing about which each person will be questioned.

- Increasing the rate of heartbeat, raising blood pressure and heightening nervous tension and so on, when watching horror movies and scenes of bloodshed.

- Late nights cause harm to the body, and each person will be asked on the Day of Resurrection how he used his body.

- Physical harm caused to children when they imitate Superman and the Man of Iron and others; harm caused to adults when they imitate boxers and wrestlers.

Financial impact:

- Spending money on buying TVs and films, paying for repairs and improvements and receiving equipment [dishes, descrambling devices, etc.]. A person will be asked about this money on the Day of Resurrection: what did he spend it on?

- Many people rush to buy extras that they do not need, or they compete in buying clothes because of the advertisements etc. that they see on the screen.

Advice

Beware of the evils of the telephone

The telephone is a useful invention, and is one of the essentials of modern life; it saves time, spans distances and keeps you in touch with everybody. It can be used for good purposes, such as waking people up for Fajr prayers, asking about shar’i matters and seeking fatwas, making appointments with good people, upholding the ties of kinship and advising the Muslims.

But at the same time the telephone may also be a means of doing many evil things. How often has the phone been the cause of complete wrecking of a home, the source of misery and suffering for family members and the impetus for men and women to do evil and cause mischief! The danger lies in the ease of use, for it is a direct route from the outside into the heart of the home.

Among the evil uses to which the telephone may be put are:

1- Disturbing nuisance calls.

2- Women getting to know strange (non-mahram) men, and the development of such relationships. A young man whom Allaah had guided to the path of repentance told me that when a young man gets to know a young woman by phone, she usually ends up going out with him, and whatever immorality follows on from that, only Allaah knows.

3- Wives may be turned against husbands and vice versa, or parents may be turned against their sons and daughters, and vice versa, because of telephone calls from trouble makers, resulting from hasad (destructive envy) and the love of evil and causing division among people.

4- Wasting time in idle conversations that harden the heart and turn people away from remembering Allaah. This is a problem especially among women, as they find it a way to get things off their chests.

Solutions to the phone problem include the following:

1- Watching out for misuse of the phone inside and outside the home.

2- Using wisdom when answering the phone.

3- When we hear news from someone we do not know, we should deal with it according to the Book of Allaah and obey His command (interpretation of the meaning): *"… verify it…" [al-Hujuraat 49:6]*.

4- A sound Islamic education will guarantee proper use of the telephone when the person who is in charge is absent. [i.e., if children and youth are taught properly, they will not misuse the telephone when their parents and elders are not around].

5- The last resort is to disconnect the phone if the evils it causes are greater than the benefits it brings.

Nasheehah

We have to remove from our homes all symbols of false kaafir religions and images of

their gods and idols.

‘Aa’ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her) reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) would never leave anything in his house that had crosses on it except he would destroy it. (Reported by al-Bukhaari, *Fath al-Baari*, 10/385, *Baab Naqd al-Suwar*).

Nowadays we are suffering from having manufactured goods which we bring from the kaafir countries, which include images and engravings, and drawings of their gods and idols. This includes various kinds of crosses, pictures of Jesus and Mary, pictures of churches, statues of Buddha, Greek gods like the goddesses of love and good and evil, and so on.

It is not right for the home of the monotheistic Muslim to have in it the symbols of shirk that contradict Tawheed and destroy its foundations. Thus the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) used to destroy crosses if he saw them in his house, by blotting them out if they drawn or engraved, or by scratching them out or covering them in some other way, or getting rid of them altogether.

This is not religious extremism, because the one who forbade people to go to extremes – the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) – did this himself. Hence when family members want to buy vessels or mattresses, etc., they should beware of these symbols of false religions that contradict Tawheed. At the same time we must point out the importance of being moderate in this matter; if the form is not obviously a cross, for example, it does not have to be changed.

Advice

Removing pictures of animate beings

Many people decorate their homes by deliberately hanging pictures on their walls and putting statues on shelves in some corners of the house. Many of these images, whether they are three-dimensional or otherwise, include animate beings such as people, birds, animals and so on.

The statements of scholars who are well-versed in the matter clearly state that static images of animate beings are haraam, whether they are engraved or drawn or produced by machines – unlike images reflected by mirrors or in water. The hadeeth of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) which curses image makers and threatens them with being asked to do something that is beyond them, namely breathing life into their images, on the Day of Resurrection, includes everyone who works in the field of photography, except in cases where images are necessary, such as ID photos and photos used in the hunt for criminals, and so on.

Hanging up pictures of animate beings also comprises another sin which could lead to the person venerating the picture and falling into the sin of shirk, as happened to the people of Nooh. The least harm that hanging up pictures may do is to renew people's grief or lead them to boast and feel too proud of their fathers and grandfathers. No one should say "We are not prostrating to the picture!"

Whoever wants to deprive himself of the great blessing of having the angels enter his home, let him put pictures up. The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said, "The house in which there are images, the angels will not enter it." (Reported by al-Bukhaari, 4/325).

There are many ahaadeeth which forbid making images, such as:

"The people who will be most severely punished by Allaah on the Day of Resurrection will be the makers of images." (Reported by al-Bukhaari, 1/382).

'Abd-Allaah ibn 'Umar reported that the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Those who make these images will be punished on the Day of Resurrection. It will said to them, 'Bring to life that which you have created!'" (Reported by al-Bukhaari, 1/382).

Abu Hurayrah entered a house in Madeenah and saw something hanging on the wall which was engraved with forbidden images. He said, "I heard the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) say, '[Allaah says:] Who is more wrong than the one who tries to create something like My creation? Let them create a grain or an ant!'" (Reported by al-Bukhaari, 1/385).

Abu Juhayfah reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) cursed the maker of images. (Reported by al-Bukhaari, 1/393).

If you want more information on this issue, you may consult the books of the scholars.

In the commentary on the hadeeth which says that the angels will not enter a house where there are images, it says: "What is meant by 'house' is the place where a person stays, whether it is a building, a tent or anything else." (*Fath al-Baari*, 1/393).

The images which prevent the angels entering a house are images of animate beings that do not have the heads removed or are not subjected to disrespectful usage (usage such as being stepped on, etc., that makes it clear this image is not being venerated in any way). (*al-Fath*, 1/382). Making images of animate beings is a new thing innovated by those who worship images, which includes what the people of Nooh did. 'Aa'ishah narrated a hadeeth in which she told the story of the church in Abyssinia (Ethiopia), and the images inside it; she said that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "When a righteous man among them died, they used to build a place of worship over his

grave and put these images inside it; those are the most evil of people in the sight of Allaah." (*al-Fath*, 1/382).

Ibn Hajar (may Allaah have mercy on him) added:

"Al-Nawawi said: the 'ulama' said: making images of animate beings is extremely haraam, and is one of the major sins, because the one who does it is issued with a stern threat, whether the image is something that is treated with disrespect or not. It is haraam to make images whatever the case, whether the image is on a garment, a rug, any kind of coin, a vessel, a wall, or anywhere else. As for any picture that does not contain images of animate creatures, this is not haraam."

The general statement regarding images applies to both those that have shadows (three-dimensional images) and those that do not have shadows (two-dimensional images). This is proven by the hadeeth reported by Ahmad from 'Ali, who said that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Which of you will go to Madeenah and not leave any idol without breaking it or any picture without blotting it out?" (*Fath al-Baari*, 1/348).

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) was always keen to cleanse his house of forbidden pictures, as the following example illustrates:

Under the heading "*Man lam yadkhulu baytan fihi surah* (The one who does not enter a house in which there is an image)", al-Bukhaari – may Allaah have mercy on him – narrated the hadeeth of 'Aa'ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her), in which she said that she bought a pillow which had pictures on it. When the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) saw it, he stood at the door and did not enter, and she could see from his face that he was upset. She said, "O Messenger of Allaah! I repent to Allaah and His Messenger. What have I done wrong?" He said, 'What is this pillow?" She said, "I bought it so that you could sit on it and recline on it." The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "The makers of these images will be punished on the Day of Resurrection, and they will be told, 'Bring to life that which you have created!'" And he said: "The house in which there are images, the angels do not enter it." (*Fath al-Baari*, 1/392).

Some people may say, why have you spoken at such length about this topic? We say: we have entered homes and rooms where we have seen pictures of singers and other people, some of them appearing naked or almost naked, hanging on walls and mirrors and wardrobes, and placed on tables, so that the owners look at them every morning and evening. Some of them even kiss the pictures and have evil thoughts when looking at them! Thus the picture becomes one of the greatest causes of deviation. Anyone who has the eyes to see will understand at least some of the wisdom behind the Islamic prohibition of making images of animate beings.

We must conclude this discussion by pointing out the following:

1- Some people say: "Pictures are everywhere nowadays, even on tins of food, and in books and magazines and pamphlets. If we want to blot out every picture we will waste all out time doing that. What should we do?

   We say: try to buy things that have no images in them – if possible. As for the rest, blot out those that are obvious – like pictures on the covers of books, and the rest of the book can be left and used. If it is something that is no longer useful, like a newspaper and the like, remove it from the home. In the case of pictures that it is difficult to erase – like pictures on cans of food, for example – in sha Allaah it is not a sin to leave them as they are, as the scholars have said, because they are things that are difficult to avoid, and the problem is becoming overwhelming.

2- If you have to hang up something to decorate your walls, let it be some scenes of natural views or mosques or things that will not provoke feelings that are haraam.

   The one who hangs up verses of the Qur'aan and so on should pay attention to the fact that the Qur'aan was not revealed to decorate walls, and that it is a kind of disrespect to write verses of the Qur'aan in the shape of a man prostrating or a bird and the like. He should also be careful that people sitting in a gathering do not do things that go against the words of the aayah hanging above their heads.

Advice

Do not allow smoking in your home

There is enough evidence (for those who are wise) that smoking is haraam in the words of Allaah (interpretation of the meaning): *"… [Allaah] allows them as lawful al-tayyibaat [(i.e., all good and lawful) as regards things, deeds, beliefs, persons, food, etc.] and prohibits them as unlawful al-khabaa'ith (i.e., all evil and unlawful as regards things, deeds, beliefs, persons, food, etc.)…" [al-A'raaf 7:157].*

Allaah has divided food and drink into two categories, not three. There are things that are good and permissible , and there are things that are evil and forbidden. Who could dare to say nowadays that smoking is good, when we know how it stinks and we know how much money is wasted on it and how much physical damage is caused as a result of smoking?

The righteous home should have no lighters or ashtrays, not even those that are given away free as promotional gifts, let alone narghiles ("hubble-bubbles") and the like.

If you are afraid that people may smoke in your home, put up stickers to hint to people that you do not want them to smoke. If you realize that someone wants to commit this sin

in front of you, you have to stop him in whatever way is appropriate.

Advice

Beware of keeping dogs in your home

One of the habits that have come to us from the kuffaar is the custom of keeping pet dogs in the home. Many of the people in our society who are following the ways of the kuffaar bring a dog into their home. They spend money to buy the dog, although the price of a dog is haraam (according to the hadeeth narrated by Imaam Ahmad, 1/356; see also *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 3071). Then they spend money on feeding it and keeping it clean, money which they will be asked about on the Day of Resurrection. Having a dog at home has become a status symbol among many rich people and high-level employees. The dog's saliva is naajis (unclean, impure), and the dog licks the members of the household and their vessels. If a dog licks a vessel it must be washed seven times, one of which must be with earth. How about if you realize how much reward is lost by those who keep dogs? The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "There is no member of a household where a dog is kept, but their good deeds will be reduced by one qeeraat (according to a report narrated by Muslim, by two qeeraats) every day, except in the case of a dog kept for hunting, agriculture or herding sheep." (Reported by al-Tirmidhi, 1489; *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 5321). The ban on keeping dogs does not apply to working dogs kept for agriculture, hunting or guarding homes, buildings, livestock, etc. This also includes dogs kept for necessary purposes such as pursuing criminals, sniffing out drugs, and so on, as some scholars have explained. (*Al-Ta'leeq 'ala Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, Shaakir edn., 3/267).

Jibreel (peace be upon him) explained to our Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) the reason why he could not enter his house at a time they had both agreed upon. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Jibreel came to me and said: 'I was going to come to you tonight, and nothing stopped me from entering the house you were in except the fact that there was a statue of a man in the house, and a curtain on which there were images, and there was a dog in the house. Tell someone to cut the head off the statue, so it will look like a tree; tell someone to cut up the curtain and make it into two pillows; tell someone to get the dog out of the house.'" So the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) did that." (Reported by Imaam Ahmad; *Saheeh al-Jaami'*, no. 68).

Advice

Not going to extremes in decorating the house

In many people's houses nowadays there are all kinds of ornaments and decorations, because of their indulging in leisure and being too attached to this world, and their desire to boast and show off.

When you enter some homes, you are reminded of the words of Ibn ‘Abbaas: “In Paradise there is nothing of the things of this world except the names.” We have no room in this brief discussion to go into detail about all the weird and wonderful antiques, decorations, ornaments and engravings with which some homes and palaces are adorned, but we will mention the following:

Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And were it not that all mankind would have become one community (all disbelievers, desiring worldly life only), We would have provided for those who disbelieve in the Most Beneficent (Allaah), silver roofs for their houses, and elevators (and stairways, etc. of silver), whereby they ascend.

And for their houses, doors (of silver), and thrones (of silver) on which they could recline,

And ornaments of gold…”

[al-Zukhruf 43:33-35]

i.e., were it not for the fact that many ignorant people would think that being given wealth was a sign of being loved by Allaah, which would lead to all of them becoming kaafirs for the sake of wealth, Allaah could have given them roofs and staircases and locks of silver and gold from the pleasures of this world, then when they died they would have no hasanah (good deeds) to their credit, because they had already taken their share of pleasure in this world. (Ibn Katheer, *Tafseer al-Qur’aan al-‘Azeem*, 7/213)

Imaam Muslim (may Allaah have mercy on him) reported from ‘Aa’ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her) that the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) went out on a military campaign, and she took a velvet rug and covered the doorway with it. When he came back and saw the rug, she could see from his face that he was upset. He ripped it down and said, “Allaah has not commanded us to cover stones and clay with cloth!” (*Saheeh Muslim*, 3/1666)

Imaam Ahmad reported the story of Faatimah, when they had made some food and she said to ‘Ali (may Allaah be pleased with him), “Why don’t we invite the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) to join us?” So he came, and put his hands on the sides of the door, and saw a qaraam (a garment made of soft wool, with colourful designs), so he went away. Faatimah said to ‘Ali, “Go and catch up with him, and ask him, ‘Why did you go away, O Messenger of Allaah?’” [The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him)] said, “It is not right for me (according to another report: it is not right for a Prophet) to enter a decorated house.” (Reported by Imaam Ahmad, 5/221; *Saheeh al-Jaami’*, 2411).

It was also reported by Abu Dawood under the heading: *Rajul yud'aa fa yaraa makroohan* (when a man is invited and sees something disliked). (*Sunan Abi Dawood*, 3755).

Under the heading, *Hal yurja' idhaa ra'a munkaran fi'l-da'wah?* (should he go back if he sees something objectionable in the invitation?), al-Bukhaari (may Allaah have mercy on him) reported that Ibn 'Umar invited Abu Ayyoob, and he saw a wall-hanging in the house. Ibn 'Umar said, "The women are having their way." Abu Ayyoob said, "There are people I was worried about, but you were not one of them! By Allaah, I will never touch your food." Then he went away. (*Fath al-Baari*, 9/249).

Imaam Ahmad reported the same story from Saalim ibn 'Abd-Allaah ibn 'Umar, who said: "I got married during my father's lifetime, and my father announced it to the people, and Abu Ayyoob was one of the invited guests. They had covered my house with a striped green cloth, and Abu Ayyoob came and looked at it, then he said, "Are you covering the walls?" My father felt embarrassed, and said, 'Women are having their way, O Abu Ayyoob.' He said, 'Of all the people I feared would be taken over by the women…'" (*Fath al-Baari*).

Al-Tabaraani reported from Abu Juhayfah that the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "You will have a lot of worldly riches, so much so that you will cover your homes with cloth as the Ka'bah is covered. You are better today than you will be on that day." (*Saheeh al-Jaami'*, 3614).

In brief, what the scholars say about ornamentation and decoration of houses is that it is either makrooh or haraam. (*al-Aadaab al-Shar'iyyah* by Ibn Muflih, 3/421)
